scenario, it will continue to be the duty of the Government to ensure adequate availability of petroleum products to meet the demand at reasonable prices, in all parts of the country. Further, there would be need to ensure that all the players follow the prescribed rules. It is, therefore, recognised that while Government will have an important role even in the deregulated scenario, an empowered body is required to be created to cater to these needs. With these objectives in view, setting up of a "Regulatory Mechanism" for downstream petroleum sector is proposed. For the same reasons, a regulatory mechanism is considered necessary for distribution and marketing of natural gas. Further, with the participation of private oil companies in the exploration and production of oil and gas in the Indian basin, to ensure that exploitation of national mineral resources is optimal, regulatory mechanism in the upstream petroleum sector is also envisaged.

LNG Terminal at Kochi

2552. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal for LNG Terminal at Kochi in Kerala has been approved by Government and given clearance or implementation; and

(b) the state at which the proposal for LNG Terminal stands at present?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Petronet LNG Limited (PLL) a joint venture company promoted by Gas Authority of India Limited, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited, Indian Oil Corporation Limited and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited is setting up a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminal with regassification facilities. The initial capacity of the terminal is 2.5 million tonnes per annum (MTPA). All the pre-project activities have been completed and statutory approvals/clearances have mostly been obtained. PLL has invited offers for development of the terminal through engineering project and construction (EPC) route.

Processing of Seismic Survey Datas

2553. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per the recommendations of Kingston Report, there was drilling holiday in Bengal Basin area under CRBC for three years from 1997;

(b) whether during this period processing of seismic survey data was to be processed for the areas of exploration under ONGC;

(c) if so, the details of the same (year-wise area);

(d) whether the same has been completed in regard to Contai area; and

(e) if not, the reason therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir. Mr. Kingston in 1996 had recommended that for at least three years no drilling be done.

(b) and (c) The year wise break up in processing seismic data acquired in PEL areas held by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) i.e. North Jaguli and Contai in Bengal Basin is given below:

1997-1998: 109.7 Ground Line Kilometre

1998-1999: 604.4 Ground Line Kilometre

1999-2000: 920.8 Ground Line Kilometre

2000-2001: 104.3 Ground Line Kilometre

(d) and (e) The basic processing of seismic data has been completed.

Seismic survey at Contai area of West Bengal

2554. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) since when seismic survey and other studies are being made in Contai area of Bengal basin under ONGC;

(b) whether any time limit was prescribed to complete the work;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether for the blocks under NELP at least four number exploratory test drilling has to be done within two years;

(e) whether any exploratory test drilling has been done in Contai area so far; and

(f) if not, the reason therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) In Contai area Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) had taken a Petroleum Exploration Licence (PEL)